

How did Hitler come to power?

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The Munich Putsch

By 1923 Hitler was the leader of the Nazi Party. With inflation running high, Hitler thought the time was ripe for his party to seize control in Germany. With a group of ex-soldiers, including a war time air ace Hermann Goring, and Field Marshall Ludendorff, the Nazis plotted to seize control of Munich, the capital of Bavaria, and then stage a march on Berlin.

It was a disaster. The plotters had not planned things carefully enough and Hitler lost his nerve. He spent most of the crisis making speeches to his own supporters in a beer hall. When Ludendorff finally persuaded him to lead a march through the streets, the police fired on the marchers and Hitler and the Nazis ran away. Two days later Hitler was arrested.

Hitler received a five year prison sentence for the Munich Putsch, but prison was very comfortable and he was let out after serving less than a year. He spent the time writing a book about his ideas - Mein Kampf.



Hitler in Landsberg Prison

Why did people support Hitler?

Hitler promised people what they wanted

The Weimar Republic appeared to have no idea how to solve the problems of the Depression. The Nazis on the other hand promised to solve the problems. Hitler

promised most groups in Germany what they wanted. Hitler used the Jews and other sections of society as scapegoats, blaming all the problems on them. To Germans at the time Hitler made sense, he united everyone by providing explanations for Germany's problems.

People in Germany were tired of their poor quality of life. Hitler promised to make Germany proud again - it was exactly what people wanted to hear. Hitler pledged something for every part of Germany society:

| GROUP | PROMISE |
|---------------------------|---|
| Farmers | Higher prices for their produce - making up for all their losses during the Depression. |
| Unemployed workers | Jobs building public works such as roads and stadiums. |
| Middle Class | To restore the profits of small business and the value of savings. To end the Communist threat. |

To all Germans he promised to restore German honour by tearing up the hated Treaty of Versailles and by making Germany great again.

Nazi beliefs

Behind these promises were a set of beliefs that were to lead to the Second World War and the death of millions of people:

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| 1. Rearm Germany and retake what was lost at Versailles. |
| 2. The German Race (blonde, blue eyed Aryans) were a superior race. Anyone else was racially impure and should be removed from Germany. Hitler called the Germans the 'master race'. |
| 3. The 'master race' needed more living space - known (in German) as Lebensraum'. |



The 'respectable face' of Hitler. He is with the German President, Hindenburg.

Tasks

1. Why was 1923 a turning point in Hitler's career?
2. What did Hitler use the Jews and other parts of German society as?
3. How did Hitler pledge to help German farmers?
4. What did Hitler promise the unemployed?
5. What did Hitler promise the Middle Class of Germany?
6. What one promise of Hitler's appealed to almost all Germans?
7. From what you know of Nazi beliefs what do you think Hitler intended to do after the election in March 1933?

Homework: Using the information on this sheet and your knowledge design a propaganda poster that the Nazis might use to gain support in an election.

